

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-09

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 AID-05 EB-07 TRSE-00 AGR-05 COME-00

OMB-01 SP-02 SS-15 NSC-05 IGA-01 L-02 CIAE-00 INR-07

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FM AMEMBASSY COLOMBO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2209

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E.O. 11652 N/A

TAGS: EAID, CE

SUBJ: PRIME MINISTER'S REQUEST FOR SPECIAL ASSISTANCE

REF: (A) STATE 026684; (B) COLOMBO 3535; (C) COLOMBO 278;

(D) COLOMBO 276

1. APPRECIATE HELPFUL PRELIMINARY OBSERVATIONS
AND SUGGESTIONS RE PRIME MINISTER'S REQUEST FOR
SPECIAL ASSISTANCE (REF A).

2. AS FOLLOW-UP TO AMBASSADOR'S MEETING WITH PRIME
MINISTER, AID TEAM AND AID REPRESENTATIVE HAVE
TALKED WITH NUMBER OF GSL OFFICIALS, INCLUDING
DEPUTY MINISTER OF PLANNING R.D. SENANAYAKE,
ADDITIONAL SECRETARY OF PLANNING MEEGAMA, DIRECTOR
OF PLANNING PERERA, AND DIRECTOR OF EXTERNAL RESOURCES
FERNANDO. WHILE ALL RECOGNIZED THAT FAILURE OF
MAHA MONSOON HAS REDUCED IMMEDIATE DEMAND FOR FER-
TILIZER AND INTRODUCED UNCERTAINTIES IN PROJECTIONS,
NONETHELESS, GSL STILL ESTIMATES CY 1975 UREA PROCUREMENT IN
RANGE 60,000A
90,000 MT. CONSEQUENTLY REF B ESTIMATEX AND RED D
PROCUREMENT FIGURES CONTINUE TO BE VALID.

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3. THESE SAME GSL OFFICIALS NOTED THAT PRIME MIN-

ISTER, IN SUGGESTING THAT PORTION THIS YEAR'S DEVELOPMENT LOAN FUNDS BE USED FOR CRASH FOOD-GROWING REQUIREMENTS (SUCH AS PUMPS), DID NOT TAKE ACCOUNT OF PROCEDURAL PROBLEMS IN SEEKING TO DIVERT PORTION OF LOAN. THEY DO NOT WANT TO JEOPARDIZE PROSPECTS OF OBTAINING FERTILIZER THIS YEAR. ON BASIS THESE CONVERSATIONS, WE AGREE WE SHOULD NOT SEEK DIVERT FY 1975 FUNDS.

4. RE SPARE PARTS, WE HAVE PASSED TO MEEGAMA INFORMATION RE IDA CREDIT CONTAINED PARA 3 REFTTEL (A). HE EXPRESSED APPRECIATION BUT INDICATED THAT SINCE \$15 MILLION LOAN FULLY COMMITTED, IT WAS UNLIKELY GSL WOULD SEEK TO COMPLICATE SITUATION BY CHANGING PREVIOUS COMMITMENTS. MEANWHILE, WORLD BANK TEAM MEMBERS PARSONS AND ELLINGER, WHO CALLED AT EMBASSY TODAY, INFORMED US THAT THEY HAVE TARGET DATE OF JULY 15 FOR COMPLETION OF \$25 MILLION AGRICULTURAL SECTOR CREDIT. PORTION THIS CREDIT COULD BE USED EITHER FOR COMPLETE AGRICULTURAL EQUIPMENT OR FOR SPARE PARTS. PARSONS AND ELLINGER ALSO NOTED THAT UNDER WORLD BANK PROCEDURES, GSL MIGHT BE ABLE PLACE ORDERS IN ADVANCE OF FORMAL AGREEMENT. THIS MIGHT BE QUICKEST VEHICLE FOR SATISFYING PM'S REQUESTS AND WE PLAN TO SUGGEST THIS POSSIBILITY TO GSL OFFICIALS.

5. WHETHER-RELATED FOOD CRISIS REMAINS SERIOUS SHORT-TERM PROBLEM FOR GSL AND AID TEAM WILL HANDCARRY ADDITIONAL INFORMATION ON SITUATION AND RESPONSE OPTIONS, INCLUDING PUMPS MENTIONED REF (A), PARA 2. VAN HOLLEN

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